

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 4492

E.O. 11652: GDS, 12/31/79

TAGE/ ETRD, ENRG, XH, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO SPONSORED SYMPOSIUM ON ENERGY

REF: USNATO 4329

SUMMARY: ECONOMIC COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN INTENDS SEEK APPROVAL AT SEPT 27 ECONADS' MEETING FOR SYMPOSIUM SPONSORED BY ECONOMIC DIRECTORATE ON "ENERGY PROBLEMS AND EAST-WEST RELATIONS." ALTHOUGH UK, CANADIAN AND TURKISH ECONADS HAVE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS REGARDING SUBJECT, CHAIRMAN IS DETERMINED PRESS AHEAD. FRANCE, AS WELL AS ITALY, GERMANY, AND THE NETHERLANDS SUPPORTED PROPOSAL. REQUEST U.S. DEL BE AUTHORIZED BY SEPT. 27 TO AGREE CONCEPT AND SUBJECT, AND BE PREPARED WITH SUGGESTIONS ALTERNATE TOPICS SHOULD OTHER DELS OBJECT STRONGLY TO ENERGY. END SUMMARY.

1. ECONOMIC DIRECTORATE HAS PROPOSED SYMPOSIUM ON "ENERGY PROBLEMS AND EAST-WEST RELATIONS" WITH SUGGESTION IT BE HELD AT NATO HEADQUARTERS ON JANUARY 31, 1973, AND FEBRUARY 1, 1974. THE SYMPOSIUM, WHICH WOULD BE ORGANIZED (BY ECONOMIC DIRECTORATE) AND FINANCED (BY INFORMATION DIRECTORATE) IN MANNER IDENTICAL TO PREVIOUS SYMPOSIA ON "SOVIET ECONOMIC GROWTH/ AND "BANKING AND FINANCE IN THE USSR," WOULD EXAMINE BROAD
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RANGE OF TOPICS REGARDING WORLK ENERGY PROBLEMS INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

A. NON-COMMUNIST ENERGY PROSPECTS OVER THE DECADE.

B. CAN THE USSR MAKE A SUBSTANTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD

ENERGY SUPPLY, AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS?

C. HOW WILL DEVELOPING NATIONS COPE IN A PERIOD OF RAPIDLY RISING ENERGY CONSTS?

2. SINCE BOTH UK AND CANADIAN ECONADS HAD EARLIER OBJECTED TO SYMPOSIUM ON NARROWER SUBJECT OF SOVIET PETROLEUM (REFTEL), CHAIRMAN OF ECONOMIC COMMITTEE INITIATED DISCUSSION OF BROADER SUBJECT AT SEPTEMBER 20 COMMITTEE MEETING. RECEPTION OF IDEA WAS LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC, WITH TURKEY JOINING UK AND CANADA IN THEIR OBJECTIONS. ALL THREE BELIEVE THERE WOULD BE LITTLE UTILITY IN SPONSORING UNCLASSIFIED DISCUSSION OF SUCH A SUBJECT, AND THAT AT ANY RATE ENERGY BEING DISCUSSED EXTENSIVELY IN OTHER FORA SUCH AS OECD. ON THE OTHER HAND, ITALY, FRANCE, GERMANY, AND THE NETHERLANDS ALL SUPPORTED PROPOSAL ON GROUNDS THAT ENERGY IS TIMELY AND ATTENTION GATHERING SUBJECT, AND THAT NATO SPONSORED SYMPOSIA ON ISSUES OF PUBLIC INTEREST WERE DESIRABLE VEHICLES FOR PRESENTING NON-MILITARY FORCE OF NATO. U.S. DEL NOTED THAT THERE WAS DANGER OF PUBLICATIONS RESULTING FROM SYMPOSIA BEING MISCONSTRUED IN PUBLIC MIND AS OFFICIAL NATO STUDIES BUT SAID HE WOULD SEEK U.S. VIEWS ON CONCEPT AND PROPOSED SUBJECT.

3. CHAIRMAN INTENDS PUSH AHEAD AT SPET 27 MEETING OF ECONOMIC COMMITTEE WITH DECISION TO PROCEED ORGANIZING SYMPOSIUM FOR JAN. 31-FEB. 1. HE HAS STATED THAT SINCE ASST. SYG KASTL ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT IDEA, HE PLANS COMMENCE ORGANIZATION WITHOUT AWAITING APPROVAL DELEGATIONS. HE IS RAISING MATTER IN ECONOMIC COMMITTEE ONLY TO AVOID POLITICAL EMBARRASMENT AND TO ENLIST HELP NATIONAL DELS.

4. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT MAIN INTEREST OF ECONOMIC DIRECTORATE (AND MORE PARTICULARLY OF ECONOMIC COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LAULAN) IS IN SPONSORING ANOTHER SYMPOSIUM, AND THAT SELECTION OF ENERGY AS SUBJECT IS A SECONDARY CONSIDERATION. ECONADS HAVE IN FACT BEEN INVITED SUGGEST OTHER SUITABLE SUBJECTS FOR ACADEMIC ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION, AND INVITATION WHICH UK DEL CONSIDERS A PLOT ON THE PART OF THE CHAIRMAN TO SEEK PRESTIGE CONFIDENTIAL

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AS SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZER AND CHAIRMAN, REGARDLESS OF THE IMPORTANCE TO ALLIANCE OF THE SUBJECT.

PREVIOUS TWO SYMPOSIA WERE HELD WITH RELUCTANT ACQUIESCENCE OF U.S. IT WAS OUR VIEW, SHARED TO A CERTAIN INTENT BY BRITISH, THAT CHAIRMAN WOULD USE AND MISUSE THEM FOR SELF-AGGRADIZEMENT. HOWEVER, MISSION BELIEVES THAT IT OOULD BE POINTLESS TO BE ISOLATD IN OPPOSING THE CONCEPT IN PRINCIPLE, AND THAT WE SHOULD BEST FOCUS ON SUITABILITY OF A PARTICULAR SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION. END COMMENT.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT ENERGY IS BEING STUDIED EXTENSIVELY IN OECD AND THAT THERE ARE LIMITS TO WHAT AN UNCLASSIFIED ACADEMIC DISCUSSION MIGHT CONTRIBUTE, A NATO

SPONSORED SYMPOSIUM ON SUBJECT COULD SERVE TO FOCUS ATTENTION
AT A POLITICAL LEVEL ON A PROBLEM OF COMMON ALLIANCE
INTEREST. WE RECOMMEND THAT U.S. BE AUTHORIZED AGREE AT
SEPT. 27 ECONOMIC COMMITTEE MEETING TO PROPOSED SYMPOSIUM AND
THAT WE BE PREPARED WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATE TOPICS FOR
STUDY SHOULD THE CONSENSUS OF THE COMMITTEE BE THAT
ENERGY IS INAPPROPRIATE.
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